

that you may have to fight a battle more than once to win it.

Let me give you a little historical background. I have spent all my life in the criminal justice system, first as a prosecutor in Texas and 22 years as a criminal court judge, heard about 20, 25,000 criminal cases, everything from stealing to killing. I saw a lot of people come to the courthouse.

But another group of people also worked their way to the courthouse, and they did not want to be there either, and that was the victims of crime. They were young, they were old, they were men, they were women, they were children. They were the silent group of people who were prey because of criminals.

Victims do not really have a lobby because most of them have to take care of themselves after they become victims of crime, until recently. In 1984, a novel program was started under the Reagan administration called VOCA, Victims of Crime Act; and the idea was pretty simple: Criminals in the Federal courts that are convicted pay into a court cost fund. That money then is used for victims and helps pay for their injuries, for their medical expenses, sometimes the funeral expenses. A great idea: Make criminals pay for the system they have created. Make them pay the rent on the courthouse. And that has been going along fairly well, so well that approximately \$1.2 billion is now in that fund. And it is not taxpayer money. It is not the Federal Government's money. It is money that belongs to victims, money that has been obtained from criminals. And it is a crucial resource for different organizations throughout the United States.

Most victims groups, programs, agencies operate under a shoestring. Many of them are just trying to keep lights on, and they receive this VOCA funding. We are talking about domestic violence shelters. We are talking about rape crisis centers. Victim compensation funds, funeral services, and medical expenses all receive benefit from VOCA funding. One example is in Houston, the Children's Assessment Center, a program like 400 others throughout the United States, where sexually abused children go so that they can be treated not only for their medical injuries but their emotional pain and get themselves prepared for trial.

We have approximately 4,400 agencies in this country that depend on that VOCA victim fund. We are talking about 3.6 million victims a year. VOCA is the only Federal program that supports services to victims of all types of crimes: homicide, drunk driving, elder financial exploitation, identity theft, robbery, and rape.

So what is the problem, Mr. Speaker? Well, the bandit budget bureaucrats are up to their old tricks. They are stealing this money from the victims fund, and they want it to go into the abyss of the Federal treasury.

This may all sound familiar. It is familiar. A year ago those same individ-

uals wanted to do the same thing, and because of different victims groups in the United States, that was stopped. That VOCA fund stayed with victims. It did not go into the abyss of the Federal treasury. But now those bureaucrats are up to these old tricks again, and they want that money to be taken from victims and put into the abyss of the Federal budget.

Mr. Speaker, that money does not belong to the Federal Government. It is not taxpayer money. It is money that belongs to victims.

Victims continue to get victimized in the criminal justice system, and now this is another way of victimizing victims once again.

Mr. Speaker, when I came to the House of Representatives, I, along with Jim Costa from California from the other side of the aisle and Katherine Harris from Florida, started the Victims Rights Caucus to bring the awareness of the plight of victims to this House. Because you see, Mr. Speaker, it is the first duty, the first responsibility, of government to protect the people. Government does a pretty good job of that. We are fighting the war on terror in Afghanistan and Iraq and other places in the world. We are doing a good job.

But we have got a war on terror going on here, and those are the terrorists that live among us, those street terrorists, criminals. And when they are captured and when they are prosecuted and they are put in jail, make them pay. Make them pay financially to support victims, their medical injuries and their needs after they have come to the criminal justice system.

So this money cannot be taken from the victims fund. We will fight this battle again, as Margaret Thatcher said. The victims posse, as I call them, those victims organizations throughout the United States, they are a posse because most of them are volunteers, and they will do what they can to make sure that this money stays left alone, that it stays in the VOCA fund, that it remains moneys for victims and to be used for victims as well.

This is a user fee for criminals. They need to pay. In fact, they need to pay more. The robber barons are taking this money; and, Mr. Speaker, this ought not to be.

CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, Americans are upset about what they view is a compromised, bought-out Congress. They hear of favors passing hands, deals being made, arms being twisted, while votes are held open to the wee hours of the night. They are sick of it, and they should be.

Minor procedural forms are being proposed within this Congress and are being touted as answers. But truly

these proposals are window dressing, and they totally ignore the massive iceberg of campaign money that infects every single officeholder at the Federal level. The old expression goes, "If you really want to know what is going on, follow the money." Thank goodness for Political Moneyline and other Web sites that help reveal what is really going on in Washington.

The reforms being proposed in this Congress do not get at the real problem. Each party is afraid of disarmament and certainly unilateral disarmament to get the money out. Ross Perot had it right a few years ago when he said, Those people in Congress, they are really good people caught in a very bad system.

Congress has nibbled around the edges of reform, and there are some congressional rule changes that may do the same. But to help move toward real reform, I am introducing a package of four bills dealing with the need for real limits on campaign spending as well as slamming shut the revolving door on lobbyists that allows too much foreign-generated influence and money inside this legislative branch.

My proposals are as follows: First, a sense of Congress resolution that recognizes that the Supreme Court erred and was not complete when, in the case of *Buckley v. Valeo*, they stated that free speech equaled money, that no matter how much you spent was okay because money was equated with free speech. Well, if that is true, the converse is true. If you do not have the money, you lack free speech. And more and more Americans are being shut out of the highest levels of lawmaking in this country because they simply do not have the money to compete.

My second bill is the constitutional amendment itself that would give Congress and the States the power to limit the contributions and expenditures made by, in support of, candidates for Federal, State, or local office. That is a tough proposal, but it is one that I think our children and grandchildren will thank us for.

□ 1900

The third measure is the Ethics in Foreign Lobbying Act of 2006, which would prohibit contribution expenditures by foreign-owned corporations and would establish within the Federal Elections Commission a clearinghouse of public information regarding political activities of foreign principals and agents of foreign principals.

It was interesting that some major Russian interests were involved with Mr. Abramoff. As this scandal unravels, we are going to find some very interesting characters sitting at the bottom of that heap.

Finally, the fourth bill is the Foreign Agents Compulsory Ethics and Trade Act of 2006, which would impose a lifetime ban on high-level government officials from representing, aiding, or advising foreign governments and foreign political parties. It imposes a 5-year

prohibition on representing, aiding or advising foreign interests, including commercial interests, before the Government of the United States. It is not enough just to shut the gym to former Members who are lobbyists. You have to get at the heart of the problem.

Campaign finance authority Herbert Alexander estimated that \$540 million was spent during the 1976 period on all elections in the United States. By 2000, that figure had risen to over \$4 billion. To run for this job in the House in 1976 cost on average \$87,000. Today, the average Member has to spend nearly \$1 million, and some \$2 million, 10 times what was spent just 30 years ago, and the population hasn't gone up by 10 times.

A winning Senate race back in 1976, you could spend about half a million dollars, which is a lot of money where I come from. Today, the average amount spent is over \$5 million; and in places like New York, that is chicken feed.

Mr. Speaker, we have become a plutocracy. America, wake up. Please support real reform for our children and grandchildren.

A MODERN ECONOMY NEEDS MODERN STATISTICS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WESTMORELAND). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, today's job seekers have a vast technological arsenal at their disposal. They can search online for job openings. They can e-mail their contact of networks for leads. They can fax their resumes and conduct job interviews via video conferencing. And if they get enough of the rat race, they can start their own business. That is what goes on today, becoming their own boss.

This dynamic, technologically advanced picture of the American workforce is fundamentally different from that that existed in the late 1930s and 1940s. At that time, most workers typically had lifelong employment in long-established companies. And heavy industrial manufacturers were among the most common employers.

In six and a half decades, Americans have experienced a sea change in how we look for work, where we work, and how often we find new work. We have progressed into a wired, upwardly mobile, flexible workforce. Small business, self-employment, and independent contracting have become the hallmarks of our entrepreneurial innovation-driven economy.

With such a drastic transformation, you would expect the way we measure employment would have evolved too. Yet our most frequently cited survey of job creation remains mired in a Depression-era mindset and research method. The Bureau of Labor Statistics' payroll survey tracks payroll employment by surveying established

businesses. This results in monthly job creation numbers. The household survey, on the other hand, tracks employment by household and produces the unemployment rate from that.

While the household survey tracks all types of employment, from someone who holds a lifelong job at a big business to someone who just became their own boss, the public and private sectors have historically relied on the payroll survey to gauge national job growth. When we look back to the pre-World War II economy, favoring the payroll survey makes sense.

Today, however, Mr. Speaker, the employment landscape is entirely different. Just look at the area I represent in Southern California, with its biotechnology facilities, independent IT contractors and small, specialized consulting firms. Yesterday's start-up is today's big business, and today's brainstorm is tomorrow's start-up. It is not surprising then that the payroll and household numbers portray quite different results.

The disparity between the job survey became particularly apparent throughout the early stages of the post-recession recovery that we enjoyed in 2002 and 2003. While the payroll survey lagged for months, the household survey demonstrated a strong and growing workforce, where self-employment accounted for one-third of all the new job creation that we saw.

Following the end of the recession in November of 2001, job creation in the household survey rebounded by the following May. Although there were some ups and downs in the ensuing months, the household job numbers never again dipped below the November 2001 level. By November of 2003, more than 2.2 million net new jobs had been created, and the pre-recession job numbers had been surpassed.

By contrast, the payroll survey did not demonstrate net job growth until August of 2003 and did not return to the November 2001 level until April of 2004, nearly 2 years after the household survey had caught up. And the payroll survey's pre-recession job numbers were not surpassed until February of 2005, a year ago. This prolonged lag in the payroll survey's job creation numbers led to claims, and you will recall this, of the "jobless recovery."

Mr. Speaker, while every other major indicator of economic strength surged forward, from the gross domestic product numbers to productivity, the payroll survey persisted as an anomaly of negative news.

Only the household survey was able to accurately portray the strength of our workforce because of its ability to track the nontraditional employment that the payroll survey misses. In an already-dynamic economy, the increased churn created by economic expansion only highlighted the growing inadequacies of a Depression-era payroll survey. Using the 20th century methods to take a snapshot of the 21st century employment picture simply did not work.

To launch an overhaul of our job surveys, I introduced H. Res. 14, which called on the Bureau of Labor Statistics to review and modernize the way we collect our jobs data. BLS conducted a report that analyzed the two surveys and evaluated options for change. While the report stopped far short of proposing a complete reform of the surveys, it did acknowledge that a growing discrepancy exists between the two numbers and determined that further analysis is necessary.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that BLS has taken this very important first step. But it is only a first step. We must continue to push for reform so that our job surveys effectively track job creation. After all, policymakers rely on accurate economic data to draft effective legislation, and businesses need the right numbers to plan for their future. In an economy where the only constant is change, unreliable numbers will result in off-target legislation and poor business decisions.

A modern economy needs modern statistics, and we must make sure that we give it that.

U.S.-INDIA NUCLEAR COOPERATION DEAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I am always pleased to lend my personal support to strengthening the partnership between India and the United States, and today I rise to express my support for the recent civil nuclear energy cooperation agreement between the world's two largest democracies. I also urge my colleagues to support such an agreement when it comes under consideration in Congress.

Based on their shared values of diversity, democracy and prosperity, the United States and India have a natural connection. The growing bilateral relationship between the United States and India is creating new and profound opportunities between our two countries. We have shared democratic values and national interests that have fostered a transformed relationship that is central to the future success of the international community, and that includes the global war on terrorism and slowing the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Building this strategic partnership was unforeseen a few years ago, but its success is important in creating a strong democratic foundation in Asia.

Mr. Speaker, India, which has long been a victim of terrorism, was the first to offer its services to the United States in its war on terrorism in Afghanistan. The Bush administration has made separation of India's military and civilian nuclear facilities an important benchmark by which to judge India's seriousness. In separating these facilities and placing the civilian ones